

Phyllis R. Burton

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To the House of Representatives:

First I want to thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to listen to parents and care givers like myself. Our lives have drastically changed due to caring for children with mental challenges. My name is Phyllis Burton, and I am a biological parent to four daughters. I am also a grandmother of 11 grand children, 6 of whom I adopted from one daughter. Their ages range from 20 to 15, which include two sets of twins. Four of the children have ADHD, two with ADHD also have OCD, all six have RAD.

My daughter had mental problems that went untreated due to lack of understanding on how to advocate for my family, and poor mental health care due to lack of mental health insurance coverage. I didn't realize this until she started having children at a very young age. One reason I'm before your committee is to share with you the burden of raising a family with mental health challenges and not being able to get the help I need for them because the insurance doesn't provide any or some of the care necessary to help them.

I think back on the times I was seeking everywhere for help for this particular daughter and I could only get minimum help. During the time I had which at the time was state Medicaid. It's the same with my grand children the insurance only covers so much and even the co-pays were too much due to lack of funds. I have Blue Cross Blue Shield, along with Medicaid but the co-pays would range from \$ 50.00 to \$ 22.00 per visit. Many Doctors do not except Medicaid for mental treatment. When I look back on getting proper mental health care for my daughter and my grandchildren, I wonder how things would be today if I was provided insurance coverage. I wonder what will happen if mental health parity bills fails. What will my great grand children and the future generations have to face? I am asking you to support Mental Health Parity in addition to supporting coverage for children with Autism by including a Mental Health Parity bill with SB 414, 415, and 981. One thing I do know for certain Mental illness doesn't go away without treatment, and treatment doesn't happen without insurance coverage. All children deserve proper mental health coverage.

Thank You



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